



Children and Anxiety

All of us are anxious from time to time, especially when we face new or uncomfortable situations.

Some anxiety in children is, in fact, expected and normal at different times in their lives. For example, at 8 months, separation anxiety is common; at any age, starting a new school can be scary.

For some, however, anxiety may become a problem, keeping the child from usual day-to-day activities. Parents should be alert to the signs of severe anxiety so they can get help early to prevent complications.

If you see these or similar behaviors, talk to your child's health care or behavioral health provider:

- extreme worry about being away from home or parents
- frequent stomach aches or other physical complaints
- refusing to go to school or group activities
- trouble sleeping or nightmares
- worrying about things before they happen
- repetitive, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) or actions (compulsions)

Early treatment can prevent future difficulties, such as trouble making or keeping friends, not doing their best in school or having trouble in social situations, and feelings of low self-esteem. Treatments may include a combination of the following: individual or family counseling, medications, and adjusting the child's home and school environment. **Anxiety problems in children are treatable.**

Adapted from a Fact Sheet from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry



For more Fact Sheets please go to www.ParentHelpNH.org

Children's Hospital at Dartmouth, Injury Prevention Center, NH Department of Health and Human Services, NH Department of Education, NH Pediatric Society, SAFE KIDS NH & Partnership for a DrugFreeNH.org